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THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" When we differ, we inform the Tribunal as to the reason why we differ and then only a decision is taken."

SRI M. NARAYANA KURUP :—" Do the Government enhance the punishment that is recommended by the Tribunal? "

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" In certain cases, we do that also."

SRI C. KANDASAMY :—" விசாரணைக்கு வந்த வழக்குகளில் Gazetted ஆபீசர்கள் சம்பந்தப்பட்டது எத்தனை ? "

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" The hon. Member may give notice of a separate question." 11-10 a.m.

Retrenchment of workers in the Government Cinchona Plantations, Valparai.

* 523 Q.—SRI M. KALYANASUNDARAM : Will the Hon. the Minister for Agriculture be pleased to state—

(a) whether it is a fact that the Government have retrenched workers on a large-scale in the Government Cinchona Plantations, Valparai, and if so, the reasons therefor; and

(b) whether the Government have received any representation from the Anamalais Plantation Workers' Union regarding this, and if so, the action taken thereon?

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM :—" (a) There is some reduction in the number of workers in the Anamalais Plantations. The decrease which is due to the reduction of work, has been effected gradually and judiciously. Owing to several reasons the expansion programme has been deferred and for the maintenance of the plantations, only a smaller labour strength is required.

" (b) Yes, Sir. A memorandum was received from the Anamalais Plantation Workers' Union, Valparai, representing among others, that the work-load in the Cinchona Plantations, Anamalais, has increased four-fold due to the reduction of workers. The Union was informed that the representation was not correct, that the workers are working only according to the prescribed working hours and that the reduction in the number of workers was due entirely to the diminished work on the plantations which require only normal maintenance at present."

SRI M. KALYANASUNDARAM :—" கனம் சபாநாயகர் அவர்களே! மொத்தம் எத்தனை ஏக்கரா விஸ்தீர்ணம் இத்த சிங்கோனு பயிர் செய்யப் பட்டிருக்கிறது ? அந்த ஏக்கர்களின் பராமரிப்புக்குப் போதுமான தொழிலாளிகள் வைக்கப்பட்டிருக்கிருர்களா ? "

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM :—" Regarding the extent of the present plantations I would like to have notice. But I would like to add that unlike the tea, coffee and other plantations, in the cinchona plantations the requirements of labour will be very high at the time of initial planting when

several operations such as felling, clearing, pitting, raising nurseries, etc., have to be carried out and the work is gradually reduced to a negligible minimum after the plants have grown for about four years. In 1950, the plantation was started and then there was a labour strength of 3,500. The strength of the present labour force is 2,200. This strength is more than adequate for doing the work."

Dr. K. B. MENON :—" Since the retrenchment has been made in a Department about the head of which there have been a number of complaints and also inquiries by the department, will the Government be pleased to give information to the Members about the special departmental inquiry that was conducted with regard to the cinchona plantations? "

The Hon. Sri M. BHAKTAVATSALAM :—" I would suggest to the hon. Member to give notice of a separate question with regard to that matter."

Sri M. KALYANASUNDARAM :—" கனம் சபாநாயகர் அவர்களே, மொத்தம் எண்ணாயிரம் ஏக்கராக்களில் சிங்கோனா பயிர் செய்யப்பட்டிருக்கிறதென்பது எனக்குத் தெரியும். சாதாரணமாக ஒரு ஏக்கராவுக்கு ஒரு தொழிலாளி அதனைப் பராமரிப்பதற்கே இருக்கவேண்டும். இருப்பினும் 1950-ம் வருஷத்திலும் எண்ணாயிரம் ஏக்கராக்கள் பயிர் செய்யப்பட்டிருக்கின்றன. 1955-ம் வருஷத்தில் இன்று கனம் மந்திரி அவர்கள் பதில் சொல்லக்கூடிய காலத்திலும் எண்ணாயிரம் ஏக்கராக்கள் பயிர் செய்யப்பட்டு வருகின்றன. அப்படியிருக்கும்போது முன்பே மூவாயிரமாக இருந்த தொழிலாளிகளின் எண்ணிக்கையை இப்பொழுது அதிகப்படுத்தாவிட்டாலும் இரண்டாயிரமாகக் குறைக்கவேண்டிய காரணம் என்ன? பல காரணங்களால் சிங்கோனா அபிவிருத்தி கைவிடப்பட்டதென்று சொல்லப்பட்டது. அந்தக் காரணங்கள் என்ன? "

The Hon. Sri M. BHAKTAVATSALAM :—" Even the Workers' Union has stated in its memorandum that there are about 7,200 acres of cinchona plantations and not 8,000 acres. Whatever be the extent, I have already stated that we require a larger number of workers at the time of initial planting and that there is no need for such number of workers afterwards. Now, we are employing 2,200 workers and even for them there is not adequate work. The Government are no doubt interested in keeping these workers without further reduction of their strength. Therefore, they are now giving them only five days' work in a week. The feasibility of finding alternative work for the labour in the plantations by undertaking subsidiary industries such as the cultivation of medicinal and essential oil plants is also being considered.

Regarding expansion of the cinchona plantations, there is a general reduction in the demand for cinchona and quinine, and that is the main reason for the Government hesitating to take up an expansion programme."

Sri N. K. PALANISAMY :—" கனம் மந்திரி அவர்கள் சிங்கோனாவுக்கு அதிக கிராக்கி இல்லையென்று சொன்னார்கள். சிங்கோனாவுக்குப் பதில் அமெரிக்காவிலிருந்து ஏராளமாக 'பாலுட்ரின்' இறக்குமதி செய்யப்படுகிறதினால்தான் சிங்கோனாவுக்கு கிராக்கி இல்லை. ஆகையால், அமெரிக்காவிலிருந்து 'பாலுட்ரின்' இறக்குமதி ஆகாமல் தடை செய்ய சர்க்கார் ஏற்பாடு செய்வார்களா? "

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MR. SPEAKER :—" This does not arise out of the main question. But if the Hon. Minister is prepared to answer, I have no objection."

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM :—" Import of these foreign medicines is also being prohibited."

SRI S. DAIVASIGAMONEY :—" Is it not a fact that the maintenance of the cinchona plantations is a drain on the resources of the Government? In view of the availability of synthetic quinine which is more efficacious, will the Government think of reducing the acreage of cinchona plantation? "

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM :—" I may tell the hon. Member that the quinine that is produced now in the cinchona factories is being consumed, that there is demand for this quantity of quinine and that, therefore, there is no need to reduce the work in the factory."

SRI T. C. NARAYANAN NAMBIAR :—" In effecting the retrenchment of about a thousand workers, have the Government stuck to the principle that the last appointed worker should be dimissed first,- that is to say, that the dismissal should take place with reference to the length of service of the workers? If not, why was this principle ' the last come first go ' not followed? "

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM :—" The Government did not dismiss any worker. Nor did they have to retrench all the workers. Whenever there were vacancies, they were not filled up. Gradually the number was being reduced. This reduction was also effected by retrenching a few workers and they were workers who came last, that is, those who were retrenched in 1953 were those who were taken in on or after 1952."

SRI K. P. GOPALAN :—" If the Government are not going to retrench the workers altogether, will the Government be pleased to give unemployment compensation to the workers who have already been retrenched? "

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM :—" I am unable to understand this advocacy for vested interests. There are ever so many other people who do not have any work at all. In 1952 or earlier, the Cinchona Factory needed some workers and they were appointed. Within six months if there is no work, they are sent out. Only the workers who come last are sent out. There is no question of giving retrenchment benefit. At that rate, we cannot run any factory."

Assignment of lands to the landless poor and Harijans.

* 524 Q.—SRI A. RATNAM : Will the Hon. the Minister for Revenue be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether the Government have given any direction to Collectors with regard to the assignment of lands to the landless poor and the Harijans; and